[Shri Khyorao Lotha]

candidates were elected. But unfortunately when the National Front Government was formed at the Centre and the Central Ministers from here started visiting Nagaland, then through their encouragement the Cong. (I) Government was toppled. At that time, Mr. S.C. Jamir was the Congress (I) Chief Minister. Before his Government was dismissed, he pleaded with the Governor? that he still commanded a majority and that he should be given a chance to prove it on the floor of the House. But the Nagaland Governor at that time he is still the Governor refused and the Congress Ministry was dismissed on the 15th of May, 1990. And on the same evening, the NPC Government was installed. Since then, instability in Nagaland has continued. There is instability in Nagaland politics. Again in December, 1990, when the Congress Party was able to muster a majority and demanded to prove it on the floor of the House, then the Speaker belonging to the NPC immediately disqualified 5 Congress (I)MLA and 10 NPC(0) MLAs, a total of 15 MLAs in a House of 60, thereby reducing the effective number of Members to 45. And this is how the Congress was reduced to a minority. And only with 24 Members, the NPC is still running the Government. Now, Sir, the situation has changed .because the Guwahati High Court has given a verdict staying the order of the Speaker disqualifying these 15 Members. So, these 15 MLAs ahad been re-instated - and even the Nagaland Government has recently given all the facilities to these 1 5 MLAs.

Now, Sir, what has happened ? The situation has further changed since 14th of this month. Only day before yesterday, one of the Cabinet Ministers of the NPC Government himself had said that "We have now lost majority, and it is unconstitutional for us to continue." And he demanded of his Chief Minister to step down gracefully so that the majority party can take over the Government. A Cabinet Minister of the NCP Government led by Mr. Vamuzo has said this. What happened ? The next evening, instead of taking his suggestion or the issue raised by him into consideration, he was dismissed. And his dismissal was also approved by the Governor. So, he was dismissed. And we find that even in a minority Government of 24, there is a split in the party. There is further erosion in that Party. Now, how can a Party which is in minority, which has instability, be allowed to run the Government ? How can a minority Government be allowed to continue ? They do not .enjoy any support within the House. They are only enjoying the support from outside. That is from the Governor only. The Governor of Nagaland supports it. His sympathy and support only is making this Government run.

The refore, Sir, it is high time that the Vamuzo Ministry is advised to step down. And in case of his refusal, he should be removed or dismissed as it was done earlier in the case of Congress Ministry. And the majority Congress Party'should be invited to form the Government to provide a stable Government in the North Eastern region, in the border region where the insurgents are creating law and order problems. To tackle this and to accelerate the development activities, the majority Party should be invited to form the Ministry immediately.

Thank you, Sir.

Release of hostages by ULFA

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY (Assam): With deep anguish I would like to draw the attention of the House to the cruel farce played with the life of the hostages kept captive by ULFA from 1st July of this year. It is none other than the Home Minister of India, Shri Chavan who told in theother House on 13-12-91 about the release of hostages by ULFA and I quote: "Fortunately this morning I got the news that they have been released —all the hostages. There are six persons. Ultimately they have freed all the six people". On the same day this news item had been carried by Doordarshan at 2 PM. in its Hindi news bulletin.

It is reliably learnt, when the control room in Delhi asked the State Government for confirmation, it appears that no one has owned the responsibility for the news. Most unfortunate part of the story is that the six hostages held by ULFA are still in their capativity. Till today, these hostages have not been released. The Government of Assam, the army intelligence, did not confirm the release of six persons by the United Liberation Front of Assam.

Earlier the Assam Chief Minister, Mr. Hiteswar Saikia reportedly informed Home Minister and the Prime Minister of the country about his success in contacting the high-placed person of ULFA. But at the same time, the Chief Minister of Assam made a statement that release of hostages is not his primary concern. I do not know what his primary concern is Probably, it is the killing of Assamese. On the other hand, ULFA repeatedly expressed its willingness to release the hostages without any pre-condition. I don't know why no effort has been made by the Government and without talcing any advantage of the situation, how the

Home Minister of t he country made the statement regarding the release of hostages by ULFA in the other House on 13-12-91.

By making this unconfirmed and false statement, the Home Minister of the country has misled not only the House but he misled the entire nation. It has appeared in the news agency reports that ULFA is willing to release the hostages without imposing any pre-condition. But I am very sorry that uptil now, no serious and no sincere effort has been made to get the release of the hostages.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF TATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): I don't think the Home Minister made any statement in this House.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRA-VARTY: I have been permitted to mention it. He made the statement in the other House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): You cannot bring in any matter which has been discussed the other House. You can mention the newspaper reports; but you can't mention a matter discussed in the other House.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Today in the other House he denied it also. As I said, whatever has been said in the other House cannot be mentioned here. But if at all, as a matter of fact, whatever has been said in the newspaper, has been denied by the Home Minister today, and that also must be coming in tomorrow's newspapers.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER (Assam) : It is very funny. One day the Home Minister makes a statement and the next day he denies it.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRA-VARTY: The Government simply cannot be indiffernet to untold mental agony that the families of the hostages had to to suffer. I want to know as to who is responsible for stalling every effort to bring about peace and normalcy back to that part of the country, that is Assam. By Government Violence, nothing can be achieved. Rather, terrorism by State-is more dangerous than terrorism caused by any group. In the name of flushing out ULFA activists, thousands of people are arrested and kept in the army jails. Although the Home Minister—probably. Mr. Jacob; I am not sure-refuted it and said, that there are no army camp jails in Assam, but the Government of Assam. confirmed that temporary army jails there and they are operating in Assam, where boys are tortured, crippled and killed. This is the most condemnabk part of the story and it should be condemned by each and every person....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA) : Your special mention is only about release of hostages by ULFA. You shall have to confine yourself to the subject.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRA-VARTY : I have got lots of proofs and documents to prove it. Sir, Assam is not a colony of the Central Government. No sane people will allow such brutal murders and brutal atrocities by the Cent ral forces, the Government forces. 4.00P.M. Sir, how the Central Government neglected that part of the country is amply proved by the false and unfounded statement as it has appeared in the press. I feel it is a failure of the Central Intelligence Department, a failure of the Army Intelligence and a failure of the Government as a whole. Sir, I request, through you, the Home Minister to make a clear statement on this. Moreover, I urge, through you, that the Government should take advantage of ULFA's decision and try to get released all the hostages, trying to bring back the United Liberation Front to the negotiating table and withdraw the army so that peace and normalcy can be brought back to Assam.

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY (Ori-Ori-ssa) : Sir, I would like to associate myself with this special mention.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : Sir, with your permission, I would like to associate myself with what my colleague has just now said. It is indeed surprising on the part of the Home Minister to have made a statement, in the other House without even... .*(Interuptions).*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA) : Kindly do not refer to a statement that was made in the other House. You can only refer to newspaper reports, but not to the statement made in the other House.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : Sir,.... *(Interruption)* __ it is yet to be published. We go by newspaper reports. The thing is, the Home Minister should have at least ascertained the facts. We find the Home Minister making a statmenton the one hand and on the other the State Government, the Army and the Intelligence Bureau denying the same. It i: all very intriguing and embarrassing. This only goes to show the lopsided and utterly indifferent attitued of the Government towards what is. happening in Assam. I feel that the home Minister owes an

[Shri David Ledger]

explanation to the entire nation. The entire nation has been taken for a ride.

SHRI M.M. JACOB : The hon. Member has presumed certain things and is going on on the basis of this prespumtions.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : No, Sir. It is not a matter of presumption. The Home Minister of India is yet to visit Assam. He is on record, I think, Sir, that he has no business to visit Assam because the army is there. I feel that the Home Minister has taken the country for a ride.

THE VICE- CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA) : The Minister of State for Home has visited Assam twice.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : The Minister of State for Home has visited. We are grateful to him. But Mr. Chavan is yet to visit.

SHRI M.M. JACOB : We are one.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : Let us hope so.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY : Sir, we demand a statement from the Home Minister on this issue.

[The vice-chairman (Shri Bbaskar Annaji Masodkar) In the Chair]

Agreement between India and China to resume border trade

SHRI KARMA TOPDEN (Sikkim) : Thank yon, Mr. Vice-Chairman.

Sir, I would like to draw your kind attention and, through you, the attention of this House, and that of the Government, to two things. The first one relates to the various agreements that have been signed between the Government of India and China recently. Both the Governments need to be congratulated on these achievements and on the progress and improvement they have made in the bilateral relations. We in Sikkim, who live in border areas, are happy that the border problems are now nearing solutions and peace along the Himalayan ranges is more firmly secured. A step forward in the normalisation of the borders is the signing of the recent agreement on the resumption of border trade. We congratulate the two Goverments on this. But at the same time, we in Sikkim feel a little bit disappointed that Sikkim has been given a step-motherly treatment by the Centre. Before the border was closed, the main border trade was carried out through Sikkim. In fact, a flourishing border trade through the State existed before 1962 and that trade contributed significantly towards the economic pros perity of the State. The international boundary on the Sikkim side has never been disputed. The border here has been peaceful for a long time. Adequate facilities and infrastructure exist on both sides of this border for carrying out a very flourishing trade. Both sides have motor able roads right upto their respective borders. Therefore, it is logical for us in Sikkim to presume that the border trade would naturally be resumed through Sikkim. However, this border trade is, instead, being resumed through the borders of U.P. where the trade will be of a very limited nature and where adequate facilities are yet to be provided. The border trade there will also not add significantly to the economic prosperity of such a large State whereas in Sikkim, where resources are scarce, the resumed border trade will bring immense prosperity to the whole State. Hence I would request, through you, that the Government of India take up, with the Government of China, the question of resuming border trade through the State of Sikkim immediately.

Sir, I have taken up this matter with the Prime Minister and also with the Commerce Minister, through my letters sometime ago and I was hoping that during the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to Delhi, the matter would be sorted out. But, unfortunately, as this has not been sorted out, I am raising it again in this House through this Special Mention.

Sir, the other thing is also somewhat related. There was an incident which took place at Chanakyapuri yesterday around 3 p.m. when a group of Tibetan school and college girls were holding a peaceful protest march. The police suddenly swooped down upon them and arrested the whole lot. Not a single policewoman was among the arresting force.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR) : Mr. Topden, just listen. You have been permitted only with regard to the agreement,

SHRI KARMA TOPDEN : This is related to border trade.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR) : How can it be related to the agreement ?

SHRI KARMA TOPDEN : Because peace in the border is important.

THE VICErCHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR.) :